Summary: FINA 21 Feb 22

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Hi folks,

FINA adjourned earlier today, marking the end of their first meeting of the Emergencies Act.

Flags:

- Committee adopted a subcommittee report outlining plans to complete pre-budget consultations, C-8, and the Emergencies Act study. While things can certainly change, under this timeline:
  - C-8 would be completed February 28th (tabled in the House February 29th)
  - Pre-budget consultations would be completed March 10thth (tabled in the House March 21st)
  - Emergencies Act Study would be completed by Thursday March 24th (Tabled in the House by March 28th)
- Committee passed a motion requesting weekly updates on the number of accounts flagged by the RCMP, CSIS, CBSA, Public Safety and FINTRAC under the powers of the Emergencies Act, and that said information be provided in a manner that respects personal privacy, national security, and operational security. See below for the full motion.
- Conservatives continued to repeat concerns that individual donors accounts were being frozen.
- Following questions from Daniel Blaikie (NDP), Department of Finance officials committed to coming back with some sort of information on how financial institutions are expected to treat data being given to them by law enforcement under the Emergencies Act.

Witnesses:

Canada Revenue Agency
• Sophie Amberg, Director, Review and Analysis Division, Charities Directorate
Department of Finance
• Isabelle Jacques, Assistant Deputy Minister, Financial Sector Policy Branch
• Julien Brazeau, Director General, Financial Crimes and Security Division, Financial Sector Policy Branch
• Manuel Dussault, Senior Director, Framework Policy, Financial Institutions Division, Financial Sector Policy Branch
Department of Justice
• Samantha Maislin Dickson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety, Defence and Immigration Portfolio

Majority of questions were directed to Finance. Conservative questions focused on freezing of bank accounts and protection of private information. Bloc Québécois questions focused on the protection of personal information, and the criteria for the declaration of a national emergency. NDP questions focused on how the emergency regulations may affect other protests, and whether or not notice could be given to those whose accounts were being frozen. Departmental officials handled themselves well under scrutiny by the opposition.

Motions:

Adam Chambers (CPC) – Adopted unanimously as amended

That for as long as the Emergencies Act financial requirements are in place, that the RCMP, CSIS, CBSA, Public Safety and FINTRAC provide a weekly report to the Committee of the total number of persons and accounts they have flagged or requested be frozen by regulated financial institutions; and, that all federally regulated financial agencies provide a similar weekly report, of the total number of persons and accounts that have been frozen using the Emergencies Act powers, that the information be provided in a manner that respects personal privacy, national security, and operational security, and, that the first report be due to the committee 2 March 2022.

Future Meetings:

Thursday February 24th 2:30 PM – 5:30 PM– RCMP and FINTRAC appearing on the Emergencies Act

Monday February 28th 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM – Clause-by-clause of Bill C-8

Thursday, March 3rd 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM – Governor of the Bank of Canada appearing on the Inflation Study

Do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions or require any further information. Have a great Tuesday.

Alexander Wozny
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